DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENT

Figure 1 shows a detail from a card-shaped data carrier which has three layers (1 2, 3), each having different absorption spectra before the laser irradiation. These three layers (1 2, 3) are preferably located on a white substrate layer (4). In addition, above the three layers (1, 2, 3) whose absorption is to be changed under the influence of the laser radiation, there is a covering layer (5) which is transparent in the visible wavelength range and in the range of the laser radiation used.

In the Claims:

In accordance with 37 CFR §1.121, please substitute for original claims 1-12 the following rewritten versions of the same claims, as amended. The changes are shown explicitly in the attached "Version with Markings to Show Changes Made."

1. (Amended) A card-shaped data carrier, comprising at least one layer into which visually readable information is introduced in the form of a change in the optical property on the basis of a material change effected irreversibly by a laser beam, characterized in that the absorption capacity of this layer for at least one wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$) is at least partly reduced as a result of the laser radiation.

2. (Amended) A card-shaped data carrier as claimed in claim 1, wherein the layer has colored pigments which, under the influence of laser radiation with the wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$), at least partly lose their absorption capacity for the wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$)

3. (Amended) The card-shaped data carrier as claimed in claim 1, comprising

- two or more layers, with each having a different absorption capacity for at least one wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$), and

- the absorption capacity of at least one layer for at least one wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$) is at least partly reduced as a result of the laser radiation.

4. (Amended) The card-shaped data carrier as claimed in claim 1, comprising

- at least two layers each of which has a respectively different absorption capacity for a different wavelength ($\lambda_1 \pm \Delta\lambda_1$, $\lambda_2 \pm \Delta\lambda_2$, $\lambda_3 \pm \Delta\lambda_3$),

- the absorption capacity of a first layer for a first wavelength ($\lambda_1 \pm \Delta\lambda_1$) being at least partly reduced under the influence of the laser radiation of the first wavelength ($\lambda_1 \pm \Delta\lambda_1$), and

- the absorption capacity of a second layer for a second wavelength ($\lambda_2 \pm \Delta\lambda_2$) being at least partly reduced under the influence of the laser radiation of the second wavelength ($\lambda_2 \pm \Delta\lambda_2$).

5. (Amended) The card-shaped data carrier as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least one of the layers is at least partly transparent to visible light (400 nm to 800 nm).

6. (Amended) The card-shaped data carrier as claimed in claim 1, wherein the layers whose absorption capacity is reduced under the influence of the laser radiation are arranged on a white substrate layer.

7. (Amended) The card-shaped data carrier as claimed in claim 1, wherein a covering layer that is transparent to visible light is arranged over the layers whose absorption capacity is reduced under the influence of the laser radiation.

8. (Amended) The card-shaped data carrier as claimed in claim 2, wherein the layers are plastic films laminated one over another, in which the colored pigments are contained.

9. (Amended) The card-shaped data carrier as claimed in claim 2, wherein the layers are varnish layers arranged one above another, in which the colored pigments are contained.

10. (Amended) A method for applying information to card-shaped data carriers, the card-shaped data carrier having at least one layer into which visually

readable information is introduced in the form of a change in an optical property on the basis of a material change effected irreversibly by a laser beam, comprising

- the provision of a card-shaped data carrier which has at least one layer whose absorption capacity for at least one wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$) is at least partly reduced as a result of the laser radiation, and

- acting on this layer of the card-shaped data carrier with the laser radiation, in order to reduce the absorption capacity of this layer for the wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$).

11. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 10, wherein

- the provision of a card-shaped data carrier which has two or more layers which have a respectively different absorption capacity for at least one wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$), and the absorption capacity of at least one layer for at least one wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$) is at least partly reduced as a result of the laser radiation,

- acting on this one layer of the card-shaped data carrier with the laser radiation, in order to reduce the absorption capacity of this layer for the wavelength ($\lambda \pm \Delta\lambda$).

12. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 10 comprising

- the provision of a card-shaped data carrier which has at least a first layer and a second layer each of which has a respectively different absorption capacity for a different wavelength ($\lambda_1 \pm \Delta\lambda_1$, $X_2 \pm \Delta\lambda_2$, $\lambda_3 \pm \Delta\lambda_3$),

- the absorption capacity of the first layer for a first wavelength ($\lambda_1 \pm \Delta\lambda_1$) being at least partly reduced under the influence of laser radiation of the first wavelength ($\lambda_1 \pm \Delta\lambda_1$),

- the absorption capacity of the second layer for a second wavelength ($\lambda_2 \pm \Delta\lambda_2$) being at least partly reduced under the influence of the laser radiation of the second wavelength ($\lambda_2 \pm \Delta\lambda_2$),

- acting on the first layer of the card body with laser radiation of the wavelength ($\lambda_1 \pm \Delta\lambda_1$), in order to reduce the absorption capacity of this layer for the wavelength ($\lambda_1 \pm \Delta\lambda_1$), and

- acting on the second layer of the card body with laser radiation of the second wavelength ($\lambda_2 \pm \Delta\lambda_2$), in order to reduce the absorption capacity of this layer for the second wavelength ($\lambda_2 \pm \Delta\lambda_2$).